THE GOD-MAN
& OTHER ESSAYS

JOSEPH GILPIN PYLE

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By JOSEPH GILPIN PYLE

THE LIFE OF JAMES J. HILL
In Two Volumes

DOUBLEDAY-DORAN COMPANY
GARDEN CITY AND NEW YORK

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THE GOD-MAN AND OTHER ESSAYS

J. G. Pyle

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BY

JOSEPH GILPIN PYLE

PRINTED AT SAINT PAUL,
MINNESOTA
1930

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The essence of the faith and the life of the author of these pages is contained in "The Meaning of Life," in "The God-Man" and in "The Sermon on The Mount." It has seemed desirable to include with them the Trollope lecture and the article on the French and Russian revolutions as being suggestive of his outlook on literature and the affairs of the world. "The Meaning of Life" was written during the last year of his life with no thought of publication but rather to satisfy an urge for expression. It is so clear and definite a statement of his practised and personal creed, and it so links together the other selections that we have placed it as a foreword. To the many who have felt the power of his mind, the integrity of his life and purpose and the beneficence of his spirit his wife and children offer this volume in his memory.

THE MEANING OF LIFE

The eminent scholar, W. M. Flinders Petrie, a man steeped in the past, begins his little book on "Revolutions of Civilization" with these words: "The meaning of life has in all ages been the goal of human thought." Perhaps no age ever needed more than our own a recall to this search.

For the separate acts that make up life, man can always give a reason. All activities, social, industrial, even mechanical, are impelled and explained by purposes that are intelligible; for ends visioned in advance. When we see a man doing things that have no meaning to us, and none to him that he can explain, we call him mad. He no longer counts in the actual scheme of things.

What is true of the part is true of the whole. The acts that make up life, compacted into a unity, must have an undivided meaning that conditions and explains them all. Else what is it all about? "Our soul in its rose mesh" is a captive that knows neither itself nor any other. If it have not one central, consistent, indefeasible meaning, then the world is not logical, is not even reasonable.

This dilemma is as old as recorded human thought. History, philosophy, all the great religions and "the deep heart of man" unite in interpreting life as a preliminary study for greater things to come. It is either that, or a wild death's dance of maniacs.

We who are Christians believe that the supreme meaning of life, the meaning into which everything merges and with which it blends, is to know God as he has revealed himself through Jesus Christ; to conform life to that standard; and so to prepare to serve Him and grow more into his likeness forever.

This faith, this purpose has always run. Fidelity to it, or defalcation, has molded the fortunes and epochs of the world. We need not blazon the great law of the meaning of life upon our foreheads, but we may carry it in our hearts. The one who can regard life apart from its ultimate meaning, who can make of his life a series of independent and unrelated parts, does not really live. Even viewed intellectually alone, such an existence is a mad chaos rather than a life. Religion is logic as well as love.

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THE GOD-MAN

A lecture read before The Bishop Gilbert Association, University of Minnesota, January 18, 1906.

"Behold, I show you a mystery." This is the first word and the last word of human life; the confession of the most arrogant intelligence and the boast of the most trustful soul; the password to the seen and the unseen worlds. It is not a misfortune of ignorant and limited beings, it is at once a stimulus to endeavor and an assurance of its reward. No stranger phenomenon has appeared in human thought and its controversies than the argument that mystery wars with truth or raises a presumption against it. For mystery is, indeed, only the warder at the gate of knowledge; and until that grim figure has been sighted there will be neither enemy to conquer nor friend with whom we may foregather in the cheer of hospitality.

The mysterious, the unfathomed, the thing not understood to its last element and in its last analysis is the groundwork and postulate of every conceivable energy and must be its starting point. Without it human intelligence would become as one of the cold, dead bodies that swim helplessly and unchangeably in empty space. Without it there could be no such thing as thought; for the mind, returning upon itself, with only the old material to pass forever through its restless mill, would wear itself to pieces or sink into lethargy undistinguishable from death. Without the lure of the mysterious there would be no such thing as physical science. All its broad expanse is conquered territory, snatched from the domain of this unseen lord of the night. Whatever stands today as fact possessed and approved was yesterday but a shrewd guess or a derided theory. Without this subtle and intoxicating incitement to explore, to prove, to establish, human thought and human knowledge and the spiritual life and all that we name progress would be inconceivable. The universe could never rise

in dignity or know a thrill of life beyond that of a heap of immobile grains of sand.

Because this element of the mysterious that lies and must lie forever close to the heart of all religious faith; that surrounds with its halo the sublime figure of the Christ, has been made a chief stumbling block to its acceptance and a challenge to believers, I dwell here upon its absolute universality. As well deny to any breathing thing its place in the animal kingdom, because air is essential to its existence. This physical world of ours is but a thaumaturgic stage, upon which ever new wonders are wrought by a hand we see not, with materials of whose essence we are profoundly ignorant. The greatest scientists are reverent before the mystery of the element in which they work. They give to it names—molecule, atom, ion, protoplasm, energy, force, motion—much as Adam may have done to the beasts as they came before him; with no more personal understanding of what the strange things behind these new names may be than there was in Eden's bower. The intrinsic nature of matter and of motion is as deeply shrouded in mystery as the essence of a soul or the processes of its redemption. So true is this that the word "agnostic," not knower, has come to be a general term of description for those whose thought is concentrated on this single phase.

In the world of philosophic inquiry there is as little of finality. We shall see, later, that metaphysical speculation has advanced us no whit beyond the starting point of Descartes—"I think, therefore, I am." But the thought, which is the being, and the being, which is the thought, are both mere names for the unprobed unknown that hides within this unrevealing equation. The psychic world, the realm of hypnotism and telepathy and spiritual influences all unmeasured and unplumbed, but gives us a glimpse of the ever-deepening mystery that enshrouds our lives. These walls, of the flesh, of the mind, of the spirit and of the soul, that hem us in four square are built solidly of that which at first glance and in the last analysis is literally inconceivable. It has pleased the Power that placed

us so to make mystery the first condition of our being; its recognition one requisite of movement; the strong wrestle with it the mark of him that overcometh any adversary. Therefore we do not step aside from the beaten path of human experience, we make no demands upon credulity, we only follow the lesson of all the centuries and welcome the common human lot when we expect and accept a mystery as the central fact of religious experience. The relation of the human soul to its Creator is a fact, as truly as the fact of material vision. But the richness and vitality and directness of that relation, which have been won by the life and death of the Christ, are not to be discredited or weakened by the fact that they constitute the great central mystery of the world. For only on this side of our prison does its fourth wall show chink or cranny. Only here does a certain crystalline quality grow and brighten before the gazing eye until its clear transparency admits the light of the unseen.

Thus the ground is cleared for a perfectly rational faith and a perfectly rational understanding of the mission of the God-Man in and to this world of ours. I am anxious to make clear and establish this first of all, because of the common assumption that religion makes some extraordinary demands upon capacity for belief. In its development of character, this is true; ineffably, wonderfully true. There are nowhere else such flowers of paradise as blossom from the human heart in the clear atmosphere of faith; but at base, at the beginning, fundamentally and eternally, there is no more difficulty in the understanding and acceptance of Christianity, there is nothing more in it to repel the critical and introspective mind than there is in the first principles of chemistry or physics or astronomy, or any other of the so-called fixed sciences as they are taught in your class rooms. All our knowledge is partial and tentative. The vast ocean of scientific achievement is dotted with the derelicts of theories once held as unquestioned fact, but now abandoned to their fate. We do not refuse to believe that fire burns, and to act on that belief, because the primal quality

of the atoms or lesser particles that unite in combustion is unknown to us; because we cannot say whether there is one element or many; because we do not know whether matter itself be more than an illusion, one form of all-pervading energy; because our ignorance in all basic particulars is comprehensive and complete. I shall hope to show you that the mystery of a God in the flesh, the divinely human Christ, is no more of a bar to knowledge; nay, that, rejecting this, you are mentally in the position of one who, in the class room, should refuse to accept the phenomena connected with the use of radium because radium is an unsolved problem and appears to set at naught many of the hitherto accepted laws of matter. I shall hope to demonstrate the reasonableness as well as the beauty of that life; that thereby some of you may perchance be saved the hideous struggle between a mind blinded by more light than it can receive and a soul that aspires to comfort and to peace. And the first step to this we have already taken together in beholding the mysterious as common to our most exalted and our most trivial experiences; to science and religion; to faith and life. The God-Man is a Christ of reason, as well as one of hope and ecstasy.

To this God-Man, thus appealing to the intelligence as well as to the heart, to the distinctly human side of him, youth should turn with all its matchless ardor and with the fine enthusiasm that it gives to its chosen causes. For about the person and the teachings and the example of Christ, the Man, there cluster all the qualities that shine brightest in the rays of life's morning. He is the first and greatest of the world's heroes; and hero-worship is not only natural to youth, but is the first step toward a worship more sacred and profound. The great writer who has made the loftiest presentation of the hero in history says this: "No nobler feeling than this of admiration for one higher than himself dwells in the breast of man. It is to this hour, and at all hours, the vivifying influence in man's life. Religion I find stands upon it; not paganism only, but far higher and truer religions—all religion hitherto

known. Hero-worship, heartfelt prostrate admiration, burning, boundless, for a noblest, god-like form of man —is not that the germ of Christianity itself?" To Christ as the hero, as the embodied ideal of human life, as the inspiration and the satisfaction of all those divine yearnings and ambitions that fill the bosom of youth, I would direct its thoughts as to its worthiest study. This is the co-ordinating step between the secular and the religious life; it is the harmony of knowledge and faith.

Put away from you the habit and the inclination with which this subject is commonly approached by very eagerness itself; a habit caught, we must regretfully admit, from the example of later years. Abandon the polemic. For many a generation now, perhaps since the days of the fathers, the learner has been brought to Christ not through the stillness and the beauty of a perfect life, but through the clash and roar of battle. Disputation, dogma, theology, all that belongs to the theoretical aspect, to the institutional side of religion, to the sour years of age, have crowded the sweetness and beauty of the Christ face away from the vision of a youth that should long to clasp him as its ideal. Not long ago I turned over the pages of a worn Bible, given to a man by his mother in childhood, and his counsellor in the tense first struggles of the opening religious life. But how unwisely used, how painfully consulted. I found its margins and blank pages full of notes, comments, cross references. But these dealt uniformly with the deep things that man may hope to solve, if at all, only at the end, not the beginning; with original sin, eternal punishment, predestination, the efficacy of different modes of baptism; with "fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute." It is this doctrinal aspect of Christianity that engages most often the keen mind of youth; disputatious, controversial, anxious to prove its young sword upon the body of an adversary before whom tried legions have gone down. Through many a bitter defeat souls have languished and agonized and fallen to death because in this battle with the windmills they never once looked above the dust of

the conflict to where the pitying face of the Christ smiled down. To raise the eyes to that vision is to understand and to be blessed.

First of all, then, consider Christ the hero, Christ the man. To that subject bring all your earnestness, all the swiftness of your intelligence, all the penetration of your judgment, all the keenness of your logic. It will repay you. And here, at the beginning, I am asking you to approach this most tremendous study that can engage humanity exactly as you approach any other topic of history. Sometimes it seems to me as if the tenderness of the ages and the reverence of the inner sanctuaries of life themselves created an artificial barrier between the God-Man and the little ones of the faith over whom he lingered so lovingly. They have learned in their education to try all things fearlessly and accept nothing where reason rejects or evidence is incomplete. The traditions of the home and the social atmosphere brand this method and even this attitude as a sacrilege if applied to the life of Jesus. Therefore the thought of him lives in many a youthful soul, that needs and longs for him, only in a darkened chamber. If it might but be true, cries aspiration; but dares not enter boldly, because it fears that in that closed room will be found impossible demands upon faith, asserted facts that history will not approve, hostilities beyond reconciliation, so much of the incomprehensible and the irreconcilable that the dim penumbra of belief will fade away and the beautiful legend cease to be even a name. Pitilessly the hungry mind asks for truth, though it come as a cleaving sword; and saves for itself a tiny undeveloped hope by not inquiring too closely into what fear hints may be but the fabric of a dream too fair and fragile for rougher handling.

It is thus that the Christ life as an actual, tangible fact, has lost some of the hold that it should have upon men and women today; some of the grasp that it lays upon those who are as fearless as they are faithful. The first word to you should be to commit no such error. Take Christ as a fact in history. Study

his life as you do that of Washington or Caesar or the line of Rameses. For he is not only a historic figure, but the one upon whom has beaten the most brilliant, the most pitiless light of time. About the actual, ascertained events of his life has gathered an enormous literature. No incident has escaped a thousand investigators, no doubt has been thrust into the background. Forget, for the moment, that he is a captain of the soul and very God of very God, and direct your first steps by the same staff on which you lean in all historical pursuits. Learn the historical Christ. Winnow away, if you please, all that the most sceptical have rejected. Require that you know of him as indisputably as you do of Charlemagne, such facts of his life and such utterances of his lips as may remain after everything questionable through tradition has been swept away, and see what remains. You will discover in it sufficient basis for a faith as fervent and as sure as the deeps of your own heart cry out for.

The man, Christ, lived the life recorded of him. He said the things attributed to him. The most hostile, the most destructive critic has admitted the main facts of his personality. There lived a man, twenty centuries ago, who was the very embodiment and type of humanity's highest ideal. There lived a man who demonstrated the perfectness and power of those qualities that today we have most need of, in the individual and in the mass. He was the manliest of men. The high heart of youth must swell with fervor and with emulation at the swift vision through these pages of the simple-born one whose courage never faltered; who was not abashed at the face of kings; who fronted death dauntlessly; who was the knightliest hero that ever trod the earth. Courage we need, today, when everywhere craven fear is making weaklings or wrecks of manhood. There was absolute sincerity in him. Right into the heart of things he looked, and his clear vision brooked no betrayal. Such sincerity we need today, when wealth and power are too generally conditioned upon that observance of the letter of laws and that faithlessness to the spirit which this man utterly

condemned. Justice was there in its sublimest form; a justice that no pity could avert, but from which no sternness could ever cut away the place of repentance and reparation. And today the whole world clamors in mortal agony for the just man; that its complaining millions need not lift unheard voices to a darkened and silent heaven. Tenacity of purpose was there, which trod to the end without a falter the path that led to a place of skulls and hideous night. We need the consecration of endeavor that finds within itself an aim worthier than success and more indomitable than failure. Capacity for noble anger was there, in the presence of the last insult to righteousness. We need nothing in this social organism of ours so much as the hand armed with the scourge that shall enter upon all our high places, and overturn the tables of the money-changers and establish forever the sacredness and the claim of human life against the mean ambitions that debase and enslave it. Once and once only was this man of peace forced into the attitude of warfare; once only he applied the arm of flesh. It was to thrust out from every sacred association the hucksters of the soul who pollute the great temple of the living God, which is the deathless claim of our common and universal humanity. And above all and pervading all there was love; love such as the world never saw before and shall not again witness; love as tender as that of a mother for her child; love as virile as that of him who lays down his life for his country; love that reached out to the confines of eternity and breathed its radiance and its power into all lives from the beginning unto the end. Such love, nay some poor feeble human imitation of it, if we could achieve it, would tomorrow turn earth into a paradise.

The fact that these qualities were possessed, were exhibited in an average lifetime by a man walking among other men and subject to all the hardest conditions of their life, to poverty and hunger and scorn and suffering and that desolateness of heart among the weak and unfaithful which is hardest of all to bear—this fact is not merely the commanding note of a uni-

versal faith, but it is the central fact of history. Bear in mind once more that, in all that has gone thus far, I am not commending to you an exquisite faith, or reconciling your minds to the fundamentals of some subtle doctrine, but merely placing before you dispassionately what history establishes; what is as certain as the battle of Marathon or the building of Rome; what is open to no cavil or misinterpretation, because all the winds have shaken and all the floods beaten upon it, and it stands for believer and unbeliever alike a fact as cold as truth and logic can make it; a fact blushing warm with the rushing heart's blood of the eternal ages; a fact as much to be reckoned with, merely as an external force, and as well established as the influence of gravitation. What place will you give to this tremendous fact in your thought and in your life?

The writer of one of the latest and most critical biographies of the Christ says: "The sole object of Christianity, however, can only be this; to be vigilantly active in seeing that the personal character of Jesus continues to be a living force among his churches." THE PERSONAL CHARACTER OF JESUS. Think on those words. Thus far we have come, and this must be our chief conclusion from a consideration of the human life of Christ. A moment later we shall speak of the reinforcement of spirit, the flood of eternal glory breaking in upon the soul from the visitation of the Son of God. But just now, for this lingering moment, let us remember the Son of Man. He stands unscathed, an entity no less distinct and individual for the scholar than for the unlettered believer, the one momentous figure, by reason of this matchless personal character, in the history of our world. He appeals to each with the unspeakable persuasion of a life in which we recognize the satisfaction of our ideals. The world has need of this man, as teacher, as example, as friend. Only as it approaches him do its peoples rejoice, and its governments learn righteousness and sit with firm seat and rule with a fixed, joyous and untroubled mind; do they "see the Lord in his beauty, and the land that is very far off."

There is a great image, drawn from great history, that pre-figures royally the relation of the Christ and his world today. King Saul is the very prototype of this strong, passionate, heedless age. Rugged and impetuous by nature, intolerant of control, jealous, full of the lust of power, impatient and headstrong, most sensible of his kingly dignity and its due, ruthless in anger toward any denial of tribute in honor and obedience, he stands, a mighty man before the Lord. He had felt, too, the invasion of that united strength and gentleness which are the spirit of God moving upon the face of troubled waters. So Saul, like this grim earth of ours, struggled on, torn between the completeness of the vision and the agony that came when darkness fell. Something more piercing and poignant than remorse visits the soul that finds itself cut off from a communion once enjoyed with God. So upon Saul descended from time to time the pall of deadly night. Knowing, as we know, the touch of the divine; feeling, as we feel, from time to time the lonely despair of abandonment; he fought, as the world that lives against its better knowledge fights, for strength, for lethe, for rescue from these lacerating alternations of fierce satisfaction of passion and unendurable longings for holiness—for very sanity of mind through integrity of soul. A giant nature bursting with a giant need towers above the dark waves of that ancient day, and shows us our own age reflected in their darkling mirror.

For his unrest one comfort only could be found. There was one fair youth, full of innocence and beauty, whose skillful touch upon the harp had power to assuage the king's black melancholy, to recall his spirit from its wanderings through nether night, to touch with gold the memory of days when he was bathed in the very light of God's presence, and to bear hope onward to the time when the sunlight of that smile might break on him again. To him, in the gloom of his tent and the gloom of his soul, came the son of Jesse, as the greater Son of David comes to our earth; and to both is the promise of a Redeemer. The most

deeply religious poet of the last century has given us the unequalled scene. To the world of this time, to any human heart softened by the vision beautiful, but seared by fierce knowledge of its baser self, the words of David come with the power of inspiration and of prophecy.

Would I suffer for him that I love? So wouldst thou—
so wilt thou!
So shall crown thee the topmost, ineffablest, uttermost
crown!
And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor leave up nor
down
One spot for the creature to stand in! It is by no
breath,
Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation joins issue
with death!
As thy Love is discovered almighty, almighty be proved
Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being Beloved!
He who did most shall bear most; the strongest shall
stand the most weak.
'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for! my flesh
that I seek
In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall
be
A Face like my face that receives thee; A Man like to
me,
Thou shalt love and be loved by forever; a Hand like
this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the
Christ stand!

I have dealt with this impressive subject thus far as a subject of actual knowledge, in the ordinary sense of that term. To begin with, you have seen that the word "knowledge" can be used, even with reference to the commonest affairs of everyday life, only with limitations and reservations. Therefore the element of the mysterious is not threatening or repulsive, because it leavens all that we can ever know or think that we know. But so far as we can know anything, and in just the same way, we can know the essential facts of the

life of the man Jesus, and have traced for us in lines of imperishable light the salient features of his character and teachings. He is for us, as he has been for countless millions, at once a solace and a joy; a model and an impulse toward everlasting things. Along an exactly parallel course, and following necessarily in the same logical steps, we are to consider Jesus as the Christ, God with us; divine as well as human, and deity as well as divinity.

At the reverent approach to this great theme, I would have you remember that, just as mystery has been found to detract nothing from the robust fact to which it always gives notice of approach, so do the willingness to believe and the tendencies of faith militate nothing against a mind attuned to the highest note of the age. Nothing can be cheaper than the notion that there is irrepressible warfare between faith and reason; that a man must surrender his judgment if he accepts the articles of an orthodox creed, and stultify his severe training in scientific accuracy. No such condition exists for entrance into the great hall of Christian faith. It is a temple of reason, and of faith justified by reason. Ambitious youth, with its confidence, its optimism, its determination to do and to be, should leave no door unopened into those realms of brightness to which it is akin. Youth prophesies for itself riches and power and the discovery of new secrets in nature; the building of cities, the rearing of noble monuments, the fighting of memorable battles, the promotion of reforms, the regeneration of humanity. The very portals of the unseen are ready to open to the flutter of its wings. It were, therefore, to abandon its rightful quest and deny its heritage were it not, too, to welcome the labor for the Holy Grail.

In asking one to accept Christ as God no unreasonable demand is made upon either mind or heart. Belief, in itself, is not the pusillanimous thing which those would have it whose own knowledge rests on axioms that can never be proved, on atoms that forever escape analysis, on forces that elude detection and description until they shrink to empty names; on laws that are

still no better than working hypotheses. Belief is a factor in character and in the making of character just as real as ambition, or the desire for revenge, or sympathy, or avarice, or the savage lust of power. Carlyle says: "Belief is great, life-giving. The history of a nation becomes fruitful, soul-elevating, great, as soon as it believes." It may throw new light into unexpected places if you will turn the pages of your histories with reference to this deep saying of a master of the philosophy of life. You will find faith inseparable from national greatness. However crude or weak or false the faith of a people, it is a motive power. And the times of decay, material and moral, are not so much the eras of great wealth or unlimited rule as they are those in which strength is sapped and vital national forces are weakened by uncertainty, indifference, the fading out of the power to believe strongly in *anything*. If we are creators of anything, we are so by virtue of the free spirit that would rise to unknown levels, and thus achieves and becomes what it has represented to itself as the height of its desire. We must first see clearly the image of the beautiful non-existent before we can fashion the statue or reclaim the wilderness or mold character or scale the heights of heaven. All history is speaking witness to the constructive quality of faith. All experience has been one long search after the unknown God, whom to lose was to "lean backward to the brute." Before every movement of permanent progress runs some strong-limbed, clear-eyed prophet of the unseen ideal, shouting, "make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Now, the final witness, I think, to Christ as the Son of God will be found, as I shall show later, so close to every one of us that we need no search in libraries, no profound pondering of argument or sifting of testimony. It is no other witness than that which sits ever in our court of last appeal; namely, the universal spiritual consciousness of man. But again I would clear the way to this by thrusting aside some of the accumulated rubbish of the centuries. The facts of the life of the Man Jesus we have found to be as well established

as any other facts of record. And a point of moment now is that, if this be true, as it is, the fact of his Godhead is fixed by the same criterion. It is impossible to find any stopping place between complete and partial belief. For either this man was not what he is shown to have been; either he was so false to himself and his own life and his message as to furnish an impossible contradiction, more inconceivable than all recorded miracle, or else he was the very Son of God. The most profound genius, the most universal information, the most pitiless logic have been applied to this problem; and always, if the investigator were but honest, if he kept faith with himself, to the same end. As the historical Christ, the man who walked and loved and suffered in Judea, cannot be denied without abrogating history and throwing away as false every remnant of the past, so can the place and portion of this divine figure as God in the flesh be doubted only at the cost of rendering worthless every test by which we separate the true from the untrue; by subjecting the intellect to the acceptance of contradictions more ludicrous than ancient tales of magic, more fabulous than the cosmogonies that none but the curious searcher through the lore of antiquity takes note of today. To doubt that Christ, the God-Man, is what he is, what the Christian church declares him, what the fair garden of his holy ones delights to show him, would be impiety, it is true, but it would also be intellectual suicide.

It is a needless task to enter here upon the controversies that have surged and stormed about the central fact of the Christian faith. It is needless to examine at length the arguments for and against the great thesis upon which hangs suspended the salvation of a world. By so much are we happier than those who have gone before and fought the battles where we pluck the ripe fruit of victory. It will be enough, perhaps, if I turn to one, the most illustrious, the most sincere, almost the most renowned, certainly the most winning of all those scholarly souls that have searched in the life of Christ for the person of God and found it *not*. I refer to the great Renan, whose life of Christ may now be

read free from the intense passions that marked its first appearance. It certainly sounded the highest note of destructive criticism. We may altogether disregard those blatant critics who speak from depths of arrogant ignorance, and those skeptics who seek a brief notoriety by disparaging the infinite, as vulgar boys love to make themselves conspicuous by howling nicknames after some reverend passer on the street. All others, of the destructive school, all those who have approached a study of the life of Christ with information, with accuracy of method, with the coldly materialistic mind, with the will to find and pronounce the truth, no matter what temples might come crashing down or what hearts might burst in desolation, have reached conclusions substantially no different from those of the splendid scholar whom I shall quote. Renan denies either the validity or the pertinence of every occurrence in the life of Christ that would identify him with God. He declares him to be a great, the very greatest of human reformers, working in a harsh and evil time. He will have none of the miracles that the church accepts. He explains the resurrection and ascension as legend or error. He says in so many words that "the miracles of Jesus were a violence done to him by his age, a concession forced from him by a passing necessity." Thus he shows us, if we follow him, the figure of a man necessarily dupe or imposter; a man whose teaching was of the loftiest and purest, resorting to tricks to maintain an ascendancy of which he was always otherwise careless; and in like ignoble fashion declaring his own portion in the Trinity to save a position and answer an expectation of those around him in which he had no part. Such conduct, such utterance, in our time we should despise or abhor; and in our or any time we must know one thing clearly: that with it there could be linked no loveliness of life, no purity of purpose, because out of the same fountain could not flow waters at once so sweet and so bitter, so crystallinely pure and so shamelessly foul. If, then, the Christ of unfaith, of the ultimate criticism, be such, he must be condemned by impartial though unwilling witnesses as unworthy, through this lapse not

from greatness, but from ordinary truth, for mere personal credit and aggrandizement, to receive even the respect of those who so measure him. Such must be the conclusion of a Renan. He cannot reach it. The admitted, the proved facts are all the other way. Here is what Renan says of one whom his own thesis makes a deceiver: "The incomparable man, to whom the universal conscience has decreed the title of the Son of God and that with justice, since he has advanced religion as no other has done, or probably ever will be able to do." And after describing the death of this being to whom he had attributed qualities so inconsistent and mutually destructive, Renan bursts into this magnificent tribute to one more compelling than cold calculation, one the very contemplation of whose wonderful life had touched his reluctant tongue with divine fire: "Rest, now, in thy glory, noble initiator. Thy work is completed; thy divinity is established. A thousand times more living, a thousand times more loved since thy death than during the days of thy pilgrimage here below, thou wilt become to such a degree the cornerstone of humanity that to tear thy name from this world would be to shake it to its foundations. Between thee and God men will no longer distinguish. Complete conqueror of death, take possession of thy kingdom, whither by the royal road thou hast traveled, ages of adorers will follow thee."

This is the summation of the sceptic. It is the final word which destructive criticism has to offer. And it is complete and decisive for the Christian heritage. For in the life of the Man Christ Jesus there were those incidents, there were those words, there was that whole declared plan and intent which the critic cannot and will not accept. There were those facts, historically established, which require thinking men and women to accept Christ as the Son of God or to believe that his character was at war with every word that he uttered and every act he did. Any other supposition places in one classification elemental contrarieties. If this could be true, then one could believe nothing whatever; for all our standards of faith and truth and falsehood would

be turned topsy-turvy, and we should live in a fantastic world of the universally unreal.

The last word, as the first, is that belief in Jesus Christ as the very Son of God is not merely reasonable, it is literally necessary to sound thinking and acceptance of unquestioned fact; and that to deny it is to assume as true the unthinkable. The modern critical world will more and more accept this position. Significant enough, in this respect, is the conclusion reached by Dr. Holtzmann in his studiously minute and exhaustive examination of the life of Christ, in the cold light of all that research can accomplish or patient investigation suggest: "He who proclaimed this faith, not merely by preaching it, but by showing it forth in the first instance in his own person and realizing it in his own life, necessarily seems, to the man who is gladdened by his Gospel, to have moved into immediate proximity to God, and to be exalted beyond comparison high above all other men. The inference is so inevitable that it is impossible for even the most dispassionate intelligence to reject it. Hence the Christian church will in each and every age join in the confession of the first generation, as set down in the Johannine Gospel: 'We beheld his glory, a glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' "

I have referred at times to a higher witness and a more eclectic proof than the books can furnish us. Let me be here a little more explicit while I touch upon the profounder question of the sources of all possible human knowledge. In the strictest sense, all is a revelation. Every fact, from the most trivial teaching of experience to the most glorious flight of inspiration, must be filtered through the human consciousness; apprehended, interpreted, presented and assimilated by it as a possession of the personality, before real meaning or life can attach to it or reside within it. This is absolutely and universally true. Just as an impression made upon the retina is referred by it to the optic nerve, and by that referred to the brain, so does the brain refer it to some hidden power or process by which the sense impression and the sensation are transformed into what we call a

sense perception; that is, it is no longer dead matter, but a real, living thing—an idea. Somewhere behind the apparatus of the body and the organ of the mind there is the crucible whose hidden alchemy transmutes the dull, mixed ore into the fine gold of the indestructible. The referee of every mental process at the last is the individual consciousness. It knows what it knows, by laws of its own being and by the constitution of its own impalpable essence. It is not enough to say that you know of the actual objective existence of these walls, this table, of all that the senses apprehend, by the testimony of the senses themselves, any more than it would be conclusive to call the optic nerve the creator of the visible universe. The conception of reality and the act of knowing appear only when impressions are seized upon and incorporated in a consciousness. Thus the later metaphysicians have recognized in the consciousness the crux of all their theories.

Referring back to what was said, at the beginning, of the birth of all knowledge from mystery, the dictum that "I am because I think" is not the most recondite law. To know that I am thinking is a requisite to thought itself. And the moment I know that I think, I have postulated myself as a being with independent, unknown, mostly untested powers. That is, the mere fact of consciousness, the universal possession, predicates and presupposes and must both admit and require the anterior presence of a capacity to receive impressions and vivify them into an idea. You cannot be even the most material of beings unless you buy your ticket at the starting point of a conscious intelligence that has no more to do with the material, inherently, than the wire that conducts the electric energy has to do with the mysterious force that it helps to transmit. That force has independent existence; and we have even discovered that the wire, though an acceptable medium for functioning, though an aid to the leap through space, is not indispensable. Equally there resides at the fountain head of all our knowledge the unapprehended cognizer, the disembodied intelligence, the first principle of the human being, which has been named conscious-

ness, but which is different and separate from all external aids whatever, and a king by divine right.

You will pardon me this brief metaphysical excursion, because there is between our mental apparatus and our spiritual function something more than an analogy. The only possible proof of mental existence is the consciousness of thinking power and the production of thought by the individual. And the sufficient proof of a spiritual life, beginning here and ending in we know not what endless cycle of advance from glory unto glory, is the individual consciousness of a spiritual side of being. We know these spiritual experiences as really, as exactly, as utterly beyond cavil as we know that we can demonstrate the sixth proposition in Euclid. The power may be faint or glowing, it may be weak or exultingly strong, but it is there. We catch glimpses; we experience longings and raptures and disappointments; we know allegiances; we are bound to the wheel of moral right and wrong; we cringe beneath the lash of that terrible word "ought," master of the infinities; we glow with renunciations and altruisms that are hopelessly at war with every instruction of the senses and the intelligence; we live, despite ourselves, in a world of spiritual values, conscious spiritual vividness and ferment. Of course we can deny this, as men refuse often to follow a thinking process to its logical conclusion. Of course we can easily dull the delicate sensibility to a spiritual atmosphere, and limit apprehension to things of grossness, as the animal prefers the fetid warmth of its burrow to the cold but wild, free air of the hills. But the fact remains unaltered; and that fact, which I dwell upon as evidence of rare validity, is the universal consciousness of a spiritual element of being; the universal consciousness of a God in the universe; the universal consciousness of the divine element in man. For I assert that this exists, where the individual is free and honest, exactly as generally and definitely and positively as the consciousness of one's self as a thinking being. The most pregnant and splendid word of revelation to lonely man is this: "Be still, and know that I am God."

This is, indeed, the unescapable conclusion of meta-

physics and philosophy. Professor Royce, eminent among American thinkers for candor, honesty and fearlessness, in his Spirit of Modern Philosophy reviews with sympathy the investigations and conclusions of all the students and leaders of speculative thought. He reduces their system to the lowest terms. He presents what they have found or failed to find. For himself, he discerns at the base of philosophy, as its enduring substratum, only an individual selfhood for each of us which has meaning and content merely as it is related to and understood by some larger selfhood, somewhere in the vast ocean of being. Just as Hegel threw across the gulf that separates us from the cloudland of Kant's speculations the airy bridge that many have crossed to a firm religious faith, so Professor Royce carries us from philosophy to gospel, and sums up in these trenchant and triumphant words a conclusion to which I have led at some length because it is the ultimate human acknowledgment of the divine as its logically necessary correlate: "In this world you are a fact in time, descended from the animals, a creature with just this brain, doomed for countless ages to precisely this conduct. But the whole temporal order is, for the absolute Self, of whom you are a part, only one way of looking at truth. * * * This word of the Self, I say, we can be sure of, for it is the one final word of our whole idealistic insight. It is the thought of the suffering God, who is just our own true self, who eternally and in our flesh bears the sins of the world, and whose natural body is pierced by the capricious wounds that hateful fools inflict upon him—it is this thought, I say, that traditional Christianity has in its deep symbolism first taught the world * * *"

We have, you will perceive, come home again. If I have led you somewhat far afield, it is only that you may realize, as travelers, how all the great beaten roads —the Appian Way of materialism, the devious path of the critic through dark and tangled forests where wild beasts lurk and robbers spring out unaware, and the mounting mountain path of philosophy through aerial spaces whose tenuous atmosphere leaves the climber

faint and breathless—all lead to the many mansions of the house of our Father and our God. At every step there travel with us, willing or unwilling, the patient feet of Him without whom we might well despair of actual approach to God and intimate knowledge of Him. It is Christ the interpreter, inspirer and sustainer, Christ the God-Man, who informs with meaning a world else unintelligible to chaos and erratic to despair. He is the solvent, wanting which the divine and the human in us would stand over against each other forever without a contact and without a messenger.

This need of a mediator, a bond, a place of meeting and of reconciliation is not merely a sublime fancy of religious faith, it is interwoven with every experience that raises us above the brute. You stand before you a row of fractions, representing what you please, and attempt to combine them in any form of mathematical relation. There they remain, obdurate, challenging, full of individual potency, but recalcitrant and utterly unserviceable until you have found the bond of a common denominator; and then you may yoke them in what fellowship you will and they will lead you to your goal of thought. You take a particle of matter and treat it in your test tubes and smelt it in your furnaces and search it with your microscopes, and it eludes you. Not there is the mystery called life; nor can you ever bridge that gulf, so tiny in one aspect and in another as wide as eternity and as deep as hell is below heaven, until you have found the undetected link. You take your cell of gray matter in the brain, and though you know that it is involved in the thinking process, you know that it is not the thought. Through infinite spaces and by unknown ways must you pass before you can say or even think, with Emerson's Brahma, "I am the doubter and the doubt." You take your simplest mathematical entities, the straight line and the curved line, each composed of assemblages of points arranged in slightly different fashion, and they part, never to meet in all eternity. Nay, more than that; they refuse to know each other in childhood and neighborliness. Except by approximation and refinement of language

you cannot reconcile them; you cannot square the circle; you cannot express the measure of the curve in terms of the right line. You take your concepts of space and of time on which all science is builded, from the free movements of the heavenly bodies to the severe utilities of the practical engineer, and you cannot advance one step without the assumption of infinity, of endlessness; of space that has nowhere a fixed limit, and time without stop or pause. Yet you cannot actually conceive, in your own mind, of such infinity. You must take for granted, before you can so much as peep from your prison house, the dual nature of all your ideas and all the material in which you work; the gaps that you can never bridge. You must presuppose their finite and their infinite sides; and you will never know more than a fraction of their properties and their relations, because you cannot forge in a finite mind the link that joins the finite to the infinite in endless chain. There is no common intellectual measure between the finite and the infinite, just as there is none between the square and the circle; and against this limitation thought forever beats its bruised wings, as wandering birds dash themselves wildly against the light-house lantern slides, greatly aspiring to reach that whiteness through the invisible death that lies between.

We have reached, I think, the true, the natural, the inevitable and the loftiest conception of Christ as the God-Man. On the one side the spiritual life of man, forever struggling toward the light, lifts the sad front of a great promontory gazing out toward gray wastes of sea. On the other side rise to ineffable skies the summits of the infinite, where spiritual development may achieve the unspoken, the undreamed-of, the inconceivable. Between the two swirls and roars the impassable strait of angry waters that human skill and human effort may never cross. He needs must be a citizen of both these lands, leaning longingly toward each other, who shall span the space between them. He must be man who can enter into the heart of humanity to help and strengthen it. He must be God who can take humanity by the hand for that last great passage from

the finite to the infinite. The very universe, from tiniest cell to stars in their distant courses, from mind to heart and from heart to soul, stands throbbing, pulsating with dim, un-understood desire in need of this interpreter of the infinite to the finite; of the reconciler of contradictions; of the giver of the common term; of that which can bend the heavens to the need of earth, and swing the censer of the human soul so high that its poor incense may touch the foot of the throne of God. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

He has come. He is at work all about us. Never for one moment has this old world been the same since he walked in Galilee. The nations pass and fade, and like insects spinning their brief hours of life in the busy air we blow hot or cold, and are full of brave ardor or chilled with foreboding as the white banner halts or advances. But the Christian spirit in the world moves on. Human motive may ebb and flow, human conduct rise or fall, but the divine steals steadily into the souls of men. Wherever today you find the highest life, you will find the Christ behind it. Look for the leaders who are most insistent upon revolt against betrayal of trust and the orgy of luxury and the old, old inhumanity of man to man, and you will find them loyal to the Christ. His word is the silent force that makes for righteousness in our time; and of all that regenerates and guides us on the upward way, now as at the beginning and unto the end, "without Him was not anything made that was made." Look anywhere that you will and see the fierce cruelty, the shameless dishonor, the riot of wantonness and blood overwhelming the men and the nations that do not worship this ideal in the temple not made with hands. Find his faithful servants, wherever they may be, and about them will stir the vernal growth of the life beautiful, and within them will be found the very kingdom of God.

Thus is the vision of the God-Man made perfect and complete. We have found and must find him everywhere. "Though I take the wings of the morning and fly unto the uttermost parts of the earth, Thou art there." He envelopes our life as does the air that we

breathe, so that to escape from him is but to gasp and die. He is no beautiful story coined by Oriental imagination for the gorgeous dreams of a soul hypnotizing itself into a meaningless peace. He is no creation of loving legend or fanatic follower. The assaults of twenty centuries have not erased or dimmed a line of him. We cannot think without him. Our physical frame, our mental constitution, the soul stuff of which we are as distinctly conscious, join as one congregation of the faithful to acknowledge and adore. To me, as student of history, as searcher for the best thought and most advanced discovery of the day, the God-Man, Christ Jesus, is not only the guide, the helper, the friend of friends, the Savior by whom alone we may pass to new and great adventure in the aeons of eternity, but he is the central figure of this cosmos; the riddle reader without whom it would be as little worthy as the jumble and chatter of some crowded Mayfair; as pointless and orderless, as utterly elusive and deluding as the chaos of some madman's dream.

Sometimes the very nearness, the unblinking steadiness, the unshaded whiteness of a great splendor blind us to its wonder. Withdrawing to the cool shadow of a cavern, whence we may look out upon the luminous made palpable, upon light vibrant like a living thing, the balance is restored and we are amazed and humbled because we had stumbled unseeing and uncomprehending through the daily and hourly miracle. The very richness of our spiritual heritage has dulled the edge of spiritual appreciation; and dimness covers the receding glory to which we have been blinded by so close approach. Let me present to you, for your final pondering thought, a sublime correction by Robert Browning of this point of view. His reverent soul, too, was shocked by the irreverent handling of heavenly jewels until they seemed but tarnished bits of glass. In imagination he withdrew the Christ from the ken and gaze of men. He fancied one Kharshish, a learned Arabian physician, traveling through Palestine just after the crucifixion, and meeting Lazarus. He hears the story of the miracle. He sees the man. It is a strange incident, appealing

powerfully to one of his profession, and so he writes it to his friend and colleague, Abib, at home. By the very recital of what he, of course, regards as an apocryphal story, the thought of the possibility of such a coming of God to man, the blending, at last, of the divine and the human into one beam of light that should reach from little earth to the confines of the infinite, possesses, inflames, moves him to strangest human depths. The closing words of his letter, "The Epistle of Kharshish," I leave with you as the most penetrating, perfect and divinely beautiful expression of our thought of the God-Man, Jesus Christ:

"The very God! Think, Abib, dost thou think?
So, the All-Great were the All-loving, too—
So, through the thunder comes a human voice
Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!
Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
Thou hast no power nor may'st conceive of mine,
But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
And thou must love me who have died for thee!' "

THE GENIUS OF ANTHONY TROLLOPE

A lecture: read before the New Century Club of Saint Paul, December, 1904.

"Strong understander of our common life.
Staple sustainment of humanity."
ROBERT BROWNING—
"The Last Adventure of Balaustion."

No one has suffered more, perhaps, than Anthony Trollope from the law that the world accepts men largely at their own valuation. If one should seek the reason for the indifference of many and the ignorance of more in relation to this literary genius, the key to it would be found not in the Trollope novels but in the Trollope autobiography. That marvel of frankness, sincerity, plain speech and proud humility is responsible for a somnolent literary judgment that requires a juster viewpoint as well as a closer acquaintance before it can kindle into real appreciation.

"Trollope," says the well-read critic to the literary student, "was the only man who ever produced passably good work by the monotonous and mechanical turning of a crank." The method of the last-century hack, plainly set forth and confessed in the autobiography, the expressed commercial element in the motive, the details of a routine life that never claimed genius for its yokefellow—all dull the ardor of the inquirer and inspire a species of good-natured contempt in those who associate high merit with the personal and professional advertising methods of a less honest and self-respecting age and nature. Trollope is still measurably unappreciated because comparatively few have made him the object of genuine literary study, and few have brought to his work minds free from the prejudice of conventions in literature and in life.

The Trollope fiction, of a writer who coined commonplace brains into commonplace books, aided by the unfortunate connection in this country of the name with a superficial and caustic criticism of American ideas and manners, produced as a pot-boiler by the novelist's mother, has prevailed for half a century over the Trol-

lope fact. But there are not wanting evidences of slow movement toward a judgment at once fair and profound. Neither accident nor experiment is responsible for the belated appearance of new editions of the works of Anthony Trollope. The reproduction of these neglected masterpieces reverses the common process of creating artfully an adventitious demand, to be satisfied later by the premeditated publication. People are reading Trollope. The judgment of time, by which both the greater and the lesser lights of literature must stand or fall, is being pronounced. The time reacts against shams and pretenses. The age seeks verities. Therefore Anthony Trollope is coming into his own.

It was impossible that this should have happened earlier. All imaginative literature is but escaping, is still scarcely free from the influence of a period of semi-intoxication. It has been a time of fluid opinion and of unfixed canons. The great and comparatively sudden extension of the area of education, the appearance of an army of persons well qualified in all respects save sound ideas and sane theories of life for the writing of books, confused standards and bade defiance to mental orderliness. There have been several of the periods of literary fashions that confuse literary values. The analytical novel, the historical novel, the novel of adventure and the novel of dissection and disease succeeded one another not by hereditary right, but by some such mysterious decree as that which elects the clubbed or the pointed shoe, and determines whether the arm of the properly gowned woman shall resemble a sausage or a balloon. Literary and popular fancy have both been unstable. When appetite usurps the function of taste, it craves variety—after the manner of all appetites. The bizarre, the unexpected alone can give sensation to the jaded palate. Small wonder that there was neither time nor inclination for a study of Trollope; with whom the adjustment of literary perspective is an instinct; who has all the gentleman's horror of loudness and vulgarity; who is never eccentric; whose style is limpidly natural; and whose theme is not the abnormal or even the type, but the infinitely varied,

unexaggerated life of men and women as they are. While the paper currency of the publishers' presses flooded every market, the gold of antique coinage was carefully hoarded in secret places. It is now boldly reappearing; and upon some of its most precious pieces are stamped the image and superscription of Anthony Trollope.

If the absurd undervaluation of Trollope is at least partially explained by the autobiography, one must turn to that same amazing revelation of himself for the guide to a true interpretation. There one finds the man himself—his methods, his motives, such secret as his literary genius knew—set down with the austere absence of either favor or malice so difficult to attain in any judgment, so phenomenal in self-examination. The method of Trollope was, externally, the apotheosis of the mechanical. The product of his mind and soul is a flower grown from seed sown deliberately in prosaic soil. He was a poor and proud nobody, suffering intensely from youthful sensitiveness, but determined to rise somehow into a freer atmosphere and a more respected place. Mrs. Trollope had long supported an invalid family by a facile pen. It is certain that from this external suggestion came the original impulse to Trollope's literary activity. He saw in the writing of fiction a means to an end; and he determined to become a novelist precisely as another youth determines to become a lawyer or an engineer. There was no calling of deep unto deep. And therefore his success contains a deep philosophical commentary upon the power of the human will over human limitations.

"To be known as somebody—to be Anthony Trollope if it be no more—is to me much." These words of his own disclose the mean beginning of ambition in a rather worthless clerk, who had gained the larger horizon but even less inspiring atmosphere of an insignificant place in the postal service. After "twenty-six years of suffering, disgrace and remorse," as he puts it, when other immortals are beginning to break an unruly Pegasus to work in harness, Trollope set himself deliberately to train an ugly, clumsy plow horse for the Derby. The

records of literary enterprise contain few instances of equal success in such a whimsically illogical task. Unhampered by any fantastic illusions about himself—in itself a choice gift of the gods—he set himself "to be Anthony Trollope," whatever that might imply. For nearly forty years he submitted to an inexpressibly irksome discipline until it became a second nature. So many words to be written every day, let fate do her worst. Business must not be neglected, pleasure must be pursued judiciously, but the daily stint must be finished at any cost. So unique is this mechanical detail in the world of successful letters, where there is a theory that genius waits on inspiration, that it has colored everybody's estimate of Trollope. Yet it is clear enough, preconceptions being laid aside, that the measure of his work is no more to be taken from this plodding system than irresponsibility and intemperance are to be registered as indispensable running-mates of genius, because they distinguished the life of Burns. Let one be content to say of Trollope's treadmill habit that "it was his way"; dismiss it as we do the eccentricities of Ibsen or of Wagner, and we may, perhaps, see a great light.

There are, however, two secondary consequences of this method that must not be overlooked. Exactly as Coleridge would never have written his most musical poem but for a deplorable personal habit, so Trollope could not have achieved the thoroughness of workmanship that characterizes him but for his system. He feared no drudgery. He slighted nothing. And the art with which he was obliged to follow a character—in his stories written in the form of series—through youth and manhood to old age, with a studious conformity to the psychology of human growth, an art supremely difficult and seldom attempted with success, was in no slight measure the product and reward of an inflexible self-rule that brought him out of bed at five in the morning or obliged him to scribble all day in a rocking railway carriage to keep his law of labor inviolate. Never has severe self-control, grafted upon the sturdy stock of the commonplace, produced fruit of such exotic flavor.

There was other compensation. As he wrought, the joy of the creator came upon him. Apprenticeship ceased in time, and the master workman began to see the great pattern in the loom. It is a law of life that utter fidelity to the practical, provided it be not also the unworthy, translates itself and carries personality over into the ideal. This unswerving obedience to a law which Trollope had established as his supreme duty burned like fire among the dross of character and refined its gold. He had the humblest conception of himself and his place. "The idea that I was the unfortunate owner of unappreciated genius," he says, "never troubled me." But unremitting toil on lines fixed by circumstance wrought out through the years the finest conception of life and literature. All the art, the ethics and the philosophy of fiction writing, with the action and reaction between it and life, are summed up in this conclusion of drudgery followed so faithfully through the years that it became at last a joy and an inspiration:

"I have always desired to 'hew out some lump of earth,' and to make men and women walk upon it just as they do walk here among us—with not more of excellence, nor with exaggerated baseness—so that my readers might recognize human beings like to themselves, and not feel themselves carried away among gods or demons. If I could do this, then I thought I might succeed in impregnating the mind of the novel reader with a feeling that honesty is the best policy; that truth prevails while falsehood fails; that a girl will be loved as she is pure and sweet and unselfish; that a man will be honored as he is true, and honest, and brave of heart; that things meanly done are ugly and odious, and things nobly done beautiful and gracious."

An impartial study of the methods of Trollope has led inevitably to the disclosure of his fundamental thesis. The white lily has grown from the muck-heap; and the sweeping of a room, with diligence and reverence, has made the action fine. One of the most charming and incisive essayists of our time says that "fiction means the common things as seen by the uncommon people, and fairy tales mean the uncommon things as

seen by the common people." For the sake of epigram he sacrifices the third aspect of the same truth. The novel, in its best estate, means the common things as seen by the common people; things so common and told to us in such homely naturalness that we, the commoners, may know that truth and beauty, be they two or one, are a part of the possible common inheritance. This is a worthy axiom of a mighty art. Its simplicity and its dignity make it a gospel of literature and a prophecy of life. "The novelist," says Trollope, "if he have a conscience, must preach his sermon with the same purpose as the clergyman, and must have his own system of ethics."

A little antiquated, like truth itself, this may sound to ears accustomed to the screaming methods of much modern fiction and the dubious morality of the popular bookstall. It came to Trollope as the simple and single lesson of a laborious and happy life. It was what, above the pounds and shillings, his work brought to him. It was, more than that, his immortal contribution to the final philosophy of fiction. This blend of method eventuating in purpose, and purpose finally consecrating method to its own ends, gives sweetness to strength and lifts the common into the holy place. From the stones of a vulgar but clean ambition a temple is builded; and its ritual, which no restless innovation shall ever evict, is so simply stated that only the thoughtful reader will pause to discover in it the law of every enduring imaginative composition from the days of the Book of Job to the latest of the moderns: "The evil and the good of my puppets, and how the evil would always lead to evil and the good produce good—that was clear to me as the stars on a summer night."

The author of more than sixty volumes of tales must, in telling them, disclose certain distinctive literary qualities. Trollope is pre-eminently distinguished by sincerity and convincingness. He abhors the complicated plot, and beats the tenter hooks of mystery into comfortable arm-rests for your chair. As like as not he will tell you complacently in the first chapter just what is going to happen in the last; yet you are as eager

not to miss one pleasant foot-pace of all the long journey as if surprises lay in ambush and uncertainty tortured you to the end. His style is lucid, never affected, generous without diffuseness; and in spite of occasional lapses is, upon the whole, admirably finished. In this as in everything he is the conscientious workman. He is always well-dressed, but never conscious of the cut of his clothes. He never hurries. You must keep his pace. You must even mark time with him, if he will, or part company. But when he has finished, looking backward you find no small portion of the compacted work that could be spared without artistic loss. Admitted to partnership in his mind, you are calmed by its sanity, enlarged by its scope, enlightened by its clearness and warmed by its charity. Yet you are not in a church, but in a playhouse. And every outline is softened and every hardness graced by a humor so gentle and penetrating, so unobtrusive and so omnipresent, inwrought with character rather than hung upon incident, that it stands, next after his noble sincerity, as the most potent element of his lasting charm. His attitude toward life is strictly although unconsciously scientific. Men and women suffer and learn, by today's trifles as by tomorrow's crises; and gravitate slowly to their best or worst, or plod like most of us the highways of the middle kingdom, obedient to the power that raised the mountain's crest and laid in darkness the foundations of the sea.

"The immortal writer, I conceive," says Mr. Chesterton, "is commonly he who does something universal in a special manner." The description fits Trollope, both as to his characters and as to the life-studies that serve as background. The best-drawn of his men and women are as changeless as time and as accurately portrayed as they would be by a flashlight. The system of successive series of tales involving the same characters, which he followed in the Barchester tales and the Parliamentary novels, has the advantage of holding the reader's interest among old friends whom he has loved and is loth to part with; and the drawback of requiring the author to follow with physiological and metaphysical accuracy

the changes wrought by the years in a given personality. The difficulty of making an individual live in the pages of a book is at least doubled when he must be true to his type through manhood and old age; when his life as husband must be the flower of his life as lover, and his rule of grown-up sons and daughters a natural evolution of his own immaturity. To this development Trollope gave endless painstaking study; and in this refinement of technique he achieves a distinguished success.

In a critical review, scarcely more than passing mention may be made of any of the host of real men and women who troop through Trollope's works. Only a personal acquaintance with them will convey any just sense of his fertility in invention, his catholicity of thought, his breadth of treatment. He does not posture before you with an exaggerated type labeled as an individual; he fastens no iterated phase as an identification tag upon his favorites; but creates just human beings, as life creates them, through life's actualities. Of all the great novelists, Trollope is least reducible to a formula; and his men and women will not sit for their portraits.

Colonel Newcombe is the only companion-piece in literature to the figure of The Warden, who introduces us to the Trollope tales. Mrs. Proudie is among the immortals. Her husband is a bishop; but Mrs. Proudie, so to speak, wears the apron. There is nowhere more delicious humor than in the story of her total subjugation of that unhappy man, her feats at arms among the minor clergy, her glorious scrimmages with the ladies of her diocese and her single grim defeat. But behind the smile is a texture of seriousness; and after the play is over comes an almost insensible but inevitable appreciation of unseen laws of life. A violent will has beaten down all opposition and then racked itself to pieces like the racing screw of a disabled ocean steamer. Events apparently planned only to amuse link themselves together in a sequence as inexorable, and by a necessity as eternal, as the Fate that dominates Greek tragedy.

Plantagenet Palliser, sometime Duke of Omnium, is the embodiment of qualities that have made England great and kept her government stable. Quiet, plodding, methodical, with what we should call a "New England conscience," narrow in idea, broad in humanity, with dignity marred by a more than feminine sensitiveness and ability abated by self-distrust, one knows this man intimately after following him through a dozen volumes; and sympathizes wholly with his adorable wife, the impatient Lady Glencora, when she diagnoses his trouble in her vigorous way: "It is the feeling that so many people blame him for so many things, and the doubt in his own mind whether he may not deserve it. And then he becomes fretful, and conscious that such fretfulness is beneath him and injurious to his honor. He condemns men in his mind, and condemns himself for condescending to condemn them. He spends one quarter of an hour in thinking that as he is Prime Minister he will be Prime Minister down to his fingers' ends, and the next in resolving that he ought never to have been Prime Minister at all." Which is exceedingly keen analysis of an introspective process probably much commoner in life than in books. It supplies, moreover, the missing link of understanding sympathy between the nervous and the phlegmatic types of men.

Girlhood and womanhood find in Trollope a supremely intuitive interpreter. He holds by the idealization of woman that has regenerated a world. Lucy Roberts and Grace Crawley and Mary Thorne and their charming company, but above all Lily Dale, are of the great, pure sisterhood of "the eternal feminine." With them mingle freely women like Alice Vavasour, Mrs. Ray and Emily Wharton, who unite in themselves all the traits most maddening to man. These well-meaning persons, having made up their minds to something they call duty, anchor there through all the winds that blow. They say eternally to father or lover or husband, "It is my duty to do as you bid me, and I will; but I shall be very unhappy." They keep that vow. They weep. They mope. They demonstrate the power of absolute obedience to provoke extreme exasperation. Opposition

most reasonable or most tyrannical is smothered under the crushing softness of these feather beds of women, who make one understand the awful power and meaning of inertia in a world of motion.

Phineas Finn is the best known and best loved of Trollope's heroes. But he is only one of the many susceptible men whose frequent infirmity of the affections and consequent practical embarrassments Trollope loved to describe. His is perhaps the single picture of the Irishman in fiction drawn with understanding, with justice, without a sneer and without caricature, that an English pen has produced. This alone should make Trollope famous. His long residence in Ireland and his sympathy with its people do not dull the brilliance of an achievement so isolated. For while in Lawrence Fitzgibbon he represents the Irishman as Englishmen have insisted upon conceiving him for three hundred years, witty, irresponsible, dissipated, treacherous, incapable of steadfast purpose, a braggart, a loafer and a dead beat, "half savage and half child," he had both the insight and the courage to present in the place of honor, to a public hopelessly prejudiced, the real Irishman at his best in Phineas Finn. Possibly that is one of the offences that the British public never quite forgave.

But the most striking figure of these tales, one of the most notable in all fiction, is that of the Reverend Josiah Crawley, perpetual curate of Hogglestock. A brilliant scholar and a faithful servant of God, misfortunes fell thick upon him and stripped him of everything but the indomitable pride that had become a disease. He is accused of theft, apparently with justice. He loses the confidence of his friends, his miserable living, not infrequently even his own iron self-control. Again, as in the case of Lady Palliser, the wife's intuition is made the instrument of a psychological analysis that the modern novel cannot hope to surpass and has seldom equaled.

"She knew that he was good and yet weak, that he was afflicted by false pride and supported by true pride, and that his intellect was still very bright, yet so dis-

mally obscured on many sides as almost to justify people in saying that he was mad. She knew that he was almost a saint, and yet almost a castaway through vanity and hatred of those above him. But she did not know that he knew all this of himself also. She did not comprehend that he should be hourly telling himself that people were calling him mad and were so calling him with truth. It did not occur to her that he could see her insight into him."

Yet it is this distracted creature who vanquishes Mrs. Proudie on her own ground; and who sustained a terrific internal struggle, inviting the extreme of ignominy, rather than either to doubt a friend or to appeal to him; an ordeal as fierce as those through which John Bunyan's soul passed to its mad ecstasy. No torture forced from him the abatement under calamity of one jot of his bitter independence. Defiant and alone he faced the world and his Maker. His spirit, his will, his very diction are those of the old Hebrew prophets; and out of the depths of his hell he bore witness before God and man without fear and without shame. Trollope made many mighty men; but none so illustrious and complete, none with the rugged grandeur and glorious steadfastness of this humble priest.

These are but a few pictures chosen from a vast gallery. A volume might be written upon his clergymen alone; these exquisite representatives of a class which, in his time and in England, it was so nearly impossible to describe without suspicion of sycophancy or of the thrust of a concealed lampoon. Believed to have dramatized for his stage a particular archdeacon, Trollope answered naively—and beyond doubt the admission cost him a twinge—that he had never known an archdeacon in his life, but had just created one according to his idea of what an archdeacon should be. Yet this is one of his most finished and balanced characters. Then there are the villains, of whom he was capable though sparing in use; and the whole throng of "citizens, mummers and others," of this crowded fair, as naturally human as Hogarth's pencil could have drawn them. The very popularity of the Barsetshire

and the Parliamentary series has been a partial misfortune, in that it has distracted public attention from the huge amount of his best work to be found in the less known novels. For a thoroughly good story, with wit and action and incident overflowing, try "Is He Popenjoy?" Or search the annals of current fiction for a more delicate literary art and a higher and purer conception of life expressed in the development of character than may be found in what is, perhaps, if one book must be chosen, the masterpiece of Trollope: "Ayala's Angel."

By the innate perception of true literary canons with which this so-called literary drudge, this office-driven, fox-hunting, comfort-loving man was so singularly gifted, Trollope not only adopted for himself a definite literary method, but clearly expressed it. It moves to mirth to discover, after a generation of the unintelligent controversy over the relative values of realism and idealism which wearies the world, that this comparatively unregarded writer had covered the field and delimited with scientific accuracy the tenable middle ground before there arose that babel of voices still sounding in our ears. He laid down the only valid distinction; not between realism and idealism, which sanely conceived are always identical, but between sensationalism and its opposite. With the earlier school of extravagant romanticists he would have nothing to do. Bulwer and his following he classed as sentimentalists. All his references to writers of his own time were gentle and almost deprecatory; but the present age will agree with his criticism of Bulwer's method: "From all of his works there comes the same flavor of an effort to produce effect. The effects are produced; but it would have been better if the flavor had not been there."

With the sensationalists, who have sprouted and spread so luxuriantly since his time, he was utterly out of sympathy. He could no more have described or even have imagined them than he could have introduced vile language or foul thoughts into his own books. Very simply, for he is always as ingenuous as a child

in that great autobiography, he takes us into his confidence: "A novel," he says, "should give a picture of common life enlivened by humor and sweetened by pathos." This, with the primary condition already referred to, that the novelist is a preacher of ethics under the law that evil begets evil and love rules and saves the world to purity and strength, constituted his artistic creed and therefore determined his working method. To him the evanescent glory of the sunrise, the holy and pathetic ardor of youth, the ecstasy of self-sacrifice and all the visions of all who have sought the Holy Grail by many paths are elements of life more real and enduring than its foulness and squalor.

Trollope never knew the greatness of his gift. No man less self-conscious in his art ever wielded pen. He took the decent English world as it moved about him. He was himself a decent, whole-souled Englishman. He was the victim of no emotional hysteria and the prey of no morbid passion for moral clinics. Proportion and comprehendingness are in all his works. Because he despised literary affectations and uttered life as he saw it, he omitted nothing and set down naught in malice. He is the great idealist, the great realist, the great dualist. Hence his scope and his enduring quality. He was the faithful chronicler of English public and private life. He was at home beyond the seven seas. Everywhere he found men and women of flesh and blood; found life precious in the fine and in the rough; found the lordship of society in the gentleman; and through the weaknesses and rogueries with which it became his business to deal from time to time, saw the human heritage and called it good. Again the autobiography mirrors the man and his art in a few of the frankest, sanest sentences ever deliberately written by a man over against his own life:

"If the rustle of a woman's petticoat has ever stirred my blood; if a cup of wine has been a joy to me; if I have thought tobacco at midnight in pleasant company to be one of the elements of an earthly paradise; if now and again I have somewhat recklessly fluttered a five-pound note over the card table—of what matter is that

to any reader? I have betrayed no woman. Wine has brought me to no sorrow. It has been the companionship of smoking that I have loved, rather than the habit. I have never desired to win money, and I have lost none. To enjoy the excitements of pleasure, but to be free from its vices and its effects—to have the sweet and leave the bitter untasted—that has been my study. The preachers tell us that this is impossible. It seems to me that hitherto I have succeeded fairly well. I will not say that I have never scorched a finger—but I carry no ugly wounds."

For drawing an audience, the plaint of a Byron, the indecent mental exposure of a Rousseau, the boundless egotism of a Bashkirtseff are, indeed, far more effective. But the crowds fall away. Nothing can be permanent save what is universal. The Trollope of the autobiography is the magian of the novels. By the spirit that moved him the tale must be told; and his world is not the less real because one finds it a wholesome dwelling place.

It is a pardonable human weakness to complete and express judgment by comparison. The absolute in any form being unknown to and unknowable by us rationally, notwithstanding all the webs that have been spun from the time of Plato to that of Kant, an achievement gives us literally only a measure for measure. Yet the student and lover of Trollope realizes a double ungratefulness in comparing him with other masters of fiction. Nothing could have been more distasteful to the man himself, who spoke of his rivals in the world of letters with an unaffected and appreciative humility both beautiful and rare. And the charm of Trollope is so subtle, his art so delicately evades the appearance of art, that any comparative estimate is baffling. He has not commonly been ranked as the equal of either Dickens or Thackeray. His work will certainly outlive that of the latter and be at least co-eval with that of the former. For it is based upon common human qualities that survive all changes of literary fashion and taste, and animated by simple and universal moral ideas already stated in his own terms. These are ordinary

and homely qualities by which to explain the contemporary recognition which, in spite of a fairly wide circle of readers and a reputation in literary circles gratifying to himself, it can hardly be said that Trollope received during his life. But without them there is neither genius nor immortality.

If there is no work of Trollope that holds or draws us back to it again and again with the spell of "The Three Musketeers," so is there none in which his characters fail to grow in richness and verisimilitude through the natural evolution of life. Lady Glencora Palliser is infinitely more interesting than Glencora McCluskie; the Phineas Finn of "The Prime Minister" is a finished product of which the Phineas of six earlier volumes is but the raw material; and the "Last Chronicle of Barset" mellow and sublimate the creations of "Framley Parsonage" and "Doctor Thorne" like age working upon rare wine. The titanic Dumas himself failed before this test. The Athos, Porthos and Aramis of "Twenty Years After" are weak and ineffectual ghosts of the immortal three musketeers. Balzac, for many years now the idol of the dilettante, excels Trollope in invention and imagination, but is inferior to him as an interpreter of life. The two are related as drama and melodrama. Balzac has his eye on types and abnormalities; on climaxes and cataclysms. Gigantic he is; but, giant-like, he heeds only the peaks and abysses in his path, where life, come fair or foul, is strange. Trollope treads every foot of the commonplace vales between. Companioning him, you know the common life; not ignorant of that above or below the average, but placing it correctly with the eccentric or the accidental. Ambitious as is the Human Comedy and monumental the genius that produced it, it has less atmosphere, less charm, a less enduring appeal to the heart of humanity and, with its pervading fault of over-ornamentation, less literary merit and genuine realistic quality than the work of the still imperfectly appreciated Anthony Trollope.

Literary schools have failed to see the wood because of the trees. Self-styled idealists have found beauty

and fancy in the world and fashioned from them cobweb castles of romance and codes of fantastic action out of contact and sympathy with dust and clay. Thither fare Jean Paul and all the rhapsodists, and that way madness lies. Self-styled realists have found in the world groveling beasts and crawling reptiles, with rankling, primeval appetites. Forthwith they struck out the high heavens with ink-blotches and re-made man after the devil's image. The greater artist does not lose balance in contemplation of either rosy cloud at sunrise or maggots squirming in a heap of carrion. Only as he realizes both, accepts both and puts them in true place and relation with each other can he be true artist or true man. It is for him to lead; but always up, not down. The centuries teach that. It is the testimony of the rocks, the key and kernel of evolutionary law, the battle call through innumerable ages of all who hope and all who know. To gaze without hysteria and without disgust upon the whole of life, accepting its contradictions and failures and incompletenesses for the sake of the Holy Child called The Future that it carries in its bosom—this is the essence of genius and the soul of art.

No man has fulfilled this law in the realm of romance with more fidelity than Anthony Trollope. Once more turning from the novels to the man, perceiving him through the clear medium of the autobiography, the mechanism of the workshop is invested with new significance and the allotted task wears a halo of unsuspected inspiration. Close about us all lie the essentials of greatness, so hardily sought and so seldom won. Absolute sincerity, working, under the law of moral progression, upon the crudest, least complex, most familiar facts of life, brings the miracle to pass. From atoms of dust it raises the undying and creative thing. The apostle was warned of the spirit that beasts and creeping things, when let down from heaven, might not be called common or unclean. One faith, one law, one knowledge led Anthony Trollope in beautiful unconsciousness to that perfect art which comprehends the whole of life. Sensationalism, a recurrent fever in

the world of letters, utters in vain its reproach against simplicity, earnestness, the slow development through the commonplace as well as through the unusual of the spirit that is in man. The greatest poet of our time answers through the lips of Pippa the challenge for which only true genius knows the countersign; a challenge to which the whole work of Anthony Trollope gives complete and triumphant expression:

> Say not "A small event!" Why "small"?
> Costs it more pain that this, ye call
> A "great event," should come to pass,
> Than that? Untwine me from the mass
> Of deeds which make up life, one deed
> Power shall fall short in or exceed!

1919 AND 1793

Printed in The Unpartizan Review, January—February, 1920.

If the revolution begun by the Russian proletariat in 1917 is superimposed upon that begun by the French proletariat in 1789, the correspondence, not only in general outline but in detail, is astonishing. The voices are those of Rousseau and Marx. The hands are those of Robespierre and Lenine. The list of identical conditions and acts in the two movements would constitute a fairly complete history of either, up to a certain stage.

There is, in each instance, an empire ruled by the weak descendant of a discredited royal line. The inheritors of a feudal system of nobility are haughtily insistent on prerogative, idly speculative about abstract principles of ideal government, largely corrupt in morals, indifferent to practical duty. The church is atrophied by formalism. Its devoted rural priests cannot ransom its upper clergy from the reproach of enormous wealth and cynical prostration before worldliness or worse. The populace is ignorant, superstitious, so inured to suffering that it inflicts pain not only without shrinking, but without real consciousness of what it has done or is about to do.

The France described by Arthur Young is the Russia seen by every traveler within the last generation. The wars which, under Louis XIV, had exhausted the wealth and man power and crippled the industry of France, wore to shreds its social and political fabric. The war with Japan and the first three years of the World War destroyed that of Russia. For centuries, from the Fronde to the Jacquerie, there had been a ferment in France that found expression in turbulence. Russia waged perpetual internal war with her Nihilist organizations. And the politico-philosophical discussions of the Paris salons and the popular pamphleteers during the eighteenth century were taken over bodily by the Russian "intelligentsia" of the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth.

This extraordinary similarity of conditions in France and Russia prior to and at the beginning of the two convulsions which were to shake them loose from their past and fit them into their new places in history finds its perfect parallel in the nature and course of the events that followed.

One country received, as a concession to popular clamor, a duma created only to be coerced or suppressed. In the other the States General was called together as a last resort, and would have been sent home again forthwith but for its desperate resistance to royal power, expressed in the Tennis Court oath. In 1914 the soldiers of the great commander in the Russian campaign against Germany were not inferior to those led by the best generals of the Bourbons. Political theory and popular discontent dissolved one army as easily as the other, by processes absolutely identical. Many persons who read how, in the early days of the revolution which substituted Lenine for Kerensky, the soldiers and sailors of Russia's army and navy deposed their officers and elected successors to them by vote of the rank and file, believed this to be a novel and original burlesque. It is a faithful reproduction of what happened universally to the armies of Louis XVI.

The French king was murdered by a Convention under the forms of law. The Russian czar was done to death, no one knows exactly how or where, by the orders or with the secret complicity of the central authority of the Soviet government.

In Paris all authority in the nation was seized by two of three of the most violent and blood-thirsty representatives of the new regime. A universal reign of terror, wholesale proscription of classes above the proletariat, and their indiscriminate slaughter followed. The Bolshevik government terrorized Russia, and Lenine and Trotzky do not fall below the crimes of the infernal triumvirate—Robespierre, Danton and Marat. By the family record of the two episodes there is no break in their diabolic brotherhood.

Fraternization between soldiers and populace dissipated the armies of the king precisely as, a century

and a quarter later, it melted away those of the czar. History repeating itself does not stop here. Propaganda was the main reliance, the most useful and effective instrument of those who seized the government of France. To every province and city hastened emissaries from Paris, to tell of the great things done there and to urge imitation, just as Soviet zealots sped from Petrograd and Moscow to every corner of the world. Every conscript of the new French republic became a missionary to the other peoples of Europe. All the revolutionaries of that era preached "fraternity," the eternal brotherhood of the have-nots, as ecstatically as any pacifist or internationalist of today. France urged every populace in the world to rise in mutiny against its rulers, and promised to them not only sympathy but effective support. The National Convention declared by a unanimous decree that the French nation would grant "fraternity and assistance to all people who wish to recover their liberty." Each army commander was furnished with a blank formula of a general letter beginning with these words: "The people of France to the people of . . . ., greeting. We are come to expel your tyrants." A motion in the Convention to confine this notice to the nations with which France was at war was defeated by a large majority. While this created in the French people a sense of nationalism and an enthusiasm different in kind from anything in the past, it weakened every arm raised against them. The boast that France was fighting not for her own liberty merely but for that of Europe had a profound effect. The mystery of the quick and easy conquest of Flanders, or Dumourier's inexplicable successes and inner vacillations, of the failure of powerful and war-hardened nations in close alliance to crush at its birth an uprising of sans-culottes and starved peasants, is partially solved by the existence everywhere below royalty and nobility, and sometimes within those high ranks, of a lurking and perhaps unconscious sympathy in the opposing soldiery who had heard this appeal, who were drawn from populations suffering like oppressions and who cherished their own secret longings for freedom.

The Bolshevist propaganda is better known, has spread more widely and produced more immediate tangible results in distant and scattered places, only because means of communication and methods of publicity have been multiplied a thousandfold within the last century. If the greater liberty of action and perfected missionary methods common now in even the most despotic state had existed in 1792, revolts, terrorism and universal popular unrest greater than are set down to Bolshevism's discredit would have spread from the Ural Mountains to the Strait of Gibraltar and the western shores of Great Britain.

Finally, soviet Russia employed the tool by which revolutionary France dug itself in behind a defence line that no present or future foe was ever able to destroy—the confiscation and distribution of accumulated property. The enormous wealth of the Church, the shrewdly or brutally assembled possessions of the crown, the estates of the nobles who emigrated and of those who remained to be attainted and guillotined, were all appropriated. The townsman looked after his own bit of loot, just as he has been doing in all the cities of Bolshevia. Informing, arson and pillage were hallmarks of good citizenship. The French peasant, like the Russian, squatted on a fragment of his seigneur's land that he had tilled as a serf. The destruction of chateaux and the expropriation of landowners went on everywhere in France as it has gone on in Russia. The unappropriated remnant of confiscated property escheated to the state. Against it millions on millions of assignats were issued. The only conceivable value of this paper money that was soon in every hand, the only safeguard of the peasant proprietor against return to slavery bitterer than before, lay in the maintenance of the existing order. It might be base or criminal, but within it alone was salvation. Therefore that distribution of property never was, never could be changed. Napoleon was too wise to disturb it. There lay one of the few limitations that even he had to admit. The Allies supreme after Waterloo, the Bourbon restored to the throne and importuned

by loyal owners of appropriated property or their descendants, never dared attempt to undo this material achievement of the revolution. The people would not have tolerated that from Convention, Directory, Emperor or King. Except that, they would tolerate almost anything.

In the same earth are embedded the roots of the Bolshevist strength which a decent world finds hard to understand. Because the Kerensky and other Socialist parties shrank from wholesale confiscation of landed and other property, they could not stand against the Lenine programme of an immediate allotment of all wealth to the proletariat. He and his were made free to betray, to imprison, to kill, to wreak their filthy will how and on whom they pleased; provided all the money, credit, products, land and other means of production were left in the hands that seized them. So the new Reign of Terror came; the red guards made good again and again in battle with the supporters of liberty and order; and the parallel between the revolutions of the west and the east is complete.

Such are the surface facts. Behind and beneath them are found forces that differentiate the two events. Interpreted by these, methods substantially the same lead by divergent ways to different ends. A new phase of social evolution unfolds.

Not very long ago the French Revolution was regarded almost universally as the last Russian revolution is now. It was mentioned only occasionally with pardoning praise, often with horror and loathing. To declare it a milestone on the upward march of man was, except among the adepts of the philosophy of history, the mark of iconoclast, atheist, brute. Even now, on a psychological test, the average reaction to the words "French Revolution," would probably be about equally divided between "Reign of Terror," "guillotine" and "Robespierre." In its own period it was anathema everywhere outside of France. Burke, lover of liberty in almost any form, purchased at almost any cost, became its frantic denunciator. The passionate apologies of brilliant young enthusiasts that

centered about the genius of Shelley and the travel-stained, but at last triumphant, devotion of Byron to liberty flared for a moment and went out in disgust or despair. Lamartine, who exulted in his country's emancipation, and painted the Girondins as heroes worthy of the best days of the ancient world, was forced to add to later editions of their history a pitiful and abject apology because he had hinted, in the eloquent glow of an optimistic interpretation of the time, that even in the work of Robespierre there might be found something over and above the bloodthirsty savage; something, it might be, obscurely purposeful and fruitful for the future. Scarcely yet can one enter the temple to Liberty begun by France a hundred and thirty years ago, without feeling, as he crosses the atrium, that his feet are crushing human bones; without eyes downcast, that he may not see grinning there the monstrous, fiendish faces of those whom he would gladly forget, and certainly deny as forbears of twentieth century liberty.

The central impulse of the French revolution was political. Though its famous slogan was "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," this association of ideas was philosophical rather than practical. The Frenchman of the revolutionary period, whether writing a polemic or carrying a pike, believed that if a full measure of political liberty were obtained, equality and fraternity would follow from the very nature of the process. Political liberty realized, first for France, then by self-propagation for all Europe, was the culminating thought of Rousseau, Mirabeau, Roland. It even shone wanly somewhere in the fuliginous and phantom-haunted brains of the haggard fiends who brandished the dagger and looked with love upon the falling knife. These might have done better without them, but despite them, they were at least one agency that sped the human spirit upon its perilous adventure along the Via Dolorosa that should one day lead the world to four years on Calvary and, we may hope, the eternal triumph of the free spirit of man. There are few expansions of the soul, few rises of endeavor to new

heights, that have not some taint of despicable origin and low-born interpreters. Few acts of the great drama that runs down the ages are without a Judas. Patriots and priests and poets, with hearts as tender as a woman's, can now look back upon that horror of more than a century ago, and understand how out of the eater comes forth meat. The dim figure that waited, invisible and unbelievable, behind the French revolution, has raised more than a corner of the veil.

That tide in the affairs of men which seems to sweep life about in ever-recurring cycles has brought again to this present time unrest, aspiration, struggle, in societies widely separated in space, in quality, in economic and political conditions. It is represented by the Bolsheviki, the Industrial Workers of the World, the Spartacides, the anarchists, nihilists, Left Wing Socialists, extreme radicals of every school. Governments everywhere, autocracies and democracies, semi-barbarous and highly civilized, watch the progress of this evil epidemic with amazement and stupefied alarm. In planning to meet and either satisfy or stamp it out, their ideas of methods and measures are all at sea. Repression and conciliation, compromise and root-and-branch extirpation, are recommended at the same moment by authorities equally capable and experienced. This confusion comes largely from failure to comprehend the thing to be dealt with. Like the worst period of the French Revolution, this symbol of an inevitable human crisis thrusts through the muck about it the ugly, misformed sprout of what may one day burgeon and blossom into undreamed-of beauty. As the French Revolution expressed, in garish colors and by unspeakable acts, an aspiration for freedom from the tyranny of kings and nobles and war-lords of every sort, a hope which is only today becoming a reality, so the mutinous unrest of the present expresses an aspiration for emancipation from the struggle for wealth on which all modern societies are built, and which can never of itself sustain a worthy social organization. But now a demand for the abolition of capitalism, and the rule everywhere of those who do the manual labor

of the world, with attendant universal confiscation, bloodshed and utter ruthlessness, affect with a sense of inhuman strangeness the bewildered imagination of the time.

Coarse and foul are the hands, corrupt the immediate purposes, cruel the hearts to which its early enforcement has been committed. Their work has been and can be only as purely destructive as that of the captors of the Bastile. But, once more, what they have done would not have risen above the red horizon of possibility, if there were not a mistake to be rectified and a crying defect in evolution to be remedied; if their blundering and wicked feet were not unconsciously sometimes directed toward an unseen righteous goal, their propaganda would not have found sympathizers or apologists in every country.

The struggle for political liberty everywhere resolved itself eventually into a question of morals. "In France," says Alison in his History of Europe, "before the Constituent Assembly had sat six months they had rendered a total change of society unavoidable, because they had transferred to the multitude the influence or possessions of a great portion of the state." The masses of all peoples came to understand that the world cannot be fit for human living, not only for themselves but for anybody, anywhere, so long as any part of it remains the chattel and plaything of dynasties or military autocrats. Thus much has been proved by the blood of the hosts who died for such a faith. From savage self-assertion has been born, in this moral order, heroic generosity and sublime self-sacrifice.

The economic basis of society, even more positively than the political, also resolves itself into a question of morals. The world will not be a fit place to live in so long as it is ruled by the power of accumulated wealth, or the present exaggerated conception of wealth as an object of desire. Existing conditions represent an economic order just as old as the political order now prostrate, even more firmly entrenched than that was in its prime, just as unfavorable to wholeness of body, peace and uprightness of mind, integrity of soul.

So far, any practical advance in this direction has been, like the first steps of the French Revolution, like all human groping after great truths imperfectly and ignorantly conceived, almost wholly futile, criminal, self-contradictory and self-destructive. "Saturn is still devouring his children." The briefest survey of the movement's methods brings into relief not merely their inadequacy but their obvious and intrinsic inconsequence. Socialism has been the principal expression of the militant moral forces making for reconstruction. Mostly it is founded on exactly the same absurdities of theory and method as the political commonwealth imagined by Rousseau. The brands of socialism are numerous and irreconcilable. All are at bottom as handy for new abuses as an impenitent junkerdom. Some demand an equitable division of all human assets;—a mere shuffling of the pack for a new deal in the same old game. Some ask only the transfer of control from manager to worker, like the election of army officers under Soviet rule. The best possible issue of this could be no more than the eventual restoration of the existing system turned upside down. The price of the meaningless transposition would be the incalculable waste and confusion that the education to new duties of the unfit would require. The system, in which the evil inheres, would stand intact. The friends of "direct action" would begin the reform of an order based on the control of wealth by seizing and enjoying it themselves. Expropriation is, for them, regeneration. Such capital as they cannot squander they must destroy. Thus shall be built a new society founded on passions more ignoble than the old, or on the same passions cloaked by new names. It requires a new biology whose cardinal principle is the survival of the least fit.

All of these schemes float in a poppy-dream of the miracle-working power of the state. To it they transfer the resources and responsibilities of the individual. From it they expect all miracles to flow. As if, when you added one hundred apples to another hundred apples you did not get two hundred apples, but grape fruit or

bananas or, more likely, genuine apples of the Hesperides. Since, in the end, somebody somewhere pays with work for every public or private service, and since it has been absolutely demonstrated that publicly controlled activities are costlier and less efficient than private enterprise applied to the same tasks, the underpinning of the academic socialistic theory collapses. The socialist state, as conceived, demands as a prior condition a regenerated human race. Any machine, physical or vital, is limited in power, in workableness, by the strength of the materials that enter into it. Transcend that, and it refuses to function or smashes. Only supermen could administer successfully a community governed by orthodox socialistic principles. Concentrations of power in the state would became unimaginably great. Some one must control and wield them. The race would again be to the swift and the battle to the strong. Rome gained nothing when her ruler was no longer the next descendant of the Caesars, but the choice of the Praetorian guards. This fairly characterizes the list of current quack remedies by which society is to be regenerated—or destroyed.

Because these have been and must be, in the nature of things, failures, it does not follow that discussion and experiment have not helped. Though they cannot cure the disease of existing social disorder, they locate it and enable minds that can probe deeper to give it a name. Once more it is suggestive to glance backward over the evolution of political changes now taking final form. The world of the English revolution, the American revolution, the French revolution, sought a measure of freedom which, after several centuries, it is only now beginning to enjoy as a settled, stable and intelligible condition of the common political life. Some of its most trusted earlier maxims and axioms were false or foolish: "the morality of a state of nature"; "the social contract"; "all men are created free and equal." But it muddled through, to the great fixed principles that the individual is entitled to all the liberty consistent with equal liberty for every other individual; that the unit of the state should be ethnic; and that

every such state should have the right of self-determination—that is, that it may choose, modify, change its own form and methods of government at its pleasure without outside interference. Nay, should such interference be threatened, all its neighbors will unite to prevent. Men are still far from apprehending all the sweet uses of liberty. In the most enlightened states, citizenship is still only a pawn, instead of standing on the king's square. But it has moved far toward the row where kingship waits. The world has made a considerable and creditable journey away from the Stuarts, the Georges, the Bourbons, the Hapsburgs, the Romanoffs and the Hohenzollerns. One almost as great, let it be noted, from Plato's Republic and Sir Thomas More and Hampden and Patrick Henry and Gambetta. Just as far it will soon move from the Jack Cades, the Marats, the Trotzkys, the Liebknechts and the Haywoods, Townleys and Fosters.

That which will emerge from this blind striving in the darkness under the law of hate, in the economic as it has in the political order, is a clearer vision of friend and foe in the revealing light of love. Capital, understood as accumulated wealth devoted to productive purposes, has a perfectly safe future. The attempt to destroy it is as mad a bit of work as the German devastation of Northern France. But it may as well realize, soon as late, that the time has come when it must lay aside the sceptre. The whole world, not merely the poor, the greedy, the ambitious, the impracticable theorists, but all the plain people, all the idealists and a large section of the owners of capital themselves are of the opinion that the accumulated possessions of the world have sanctity only just so long and so far as they are devoted to the improvement of human conditions, business, economic, social—to the advancement of the common good. Nine-tenths of the profoundly thoughtful men of this time are dissatisfied with the development of the old order. The most conservative of them declare openly that the slum, the doom of exhausting daily labor for just enough to sustain life, the dull and narrow existence

where even opportunity never is recognized, must go as fast as the System of Things permits. That is the thought behind the gifts, yearly more numerous and well-bestowed, that rich men are making to education and philanthropy. It is the more or less sincere apology of the poor deluded criminals everywhere who draw the sword for the devil, and think that they are saving Christ from the cross.

It would be absurd for any one to attempt the complete formulation of the coming political and social economy, whatever that is to be. The whole world, wrought upon by the white heat of war, is now in a state of flux. Conditions in the United States and Great Britain are scarcely less significant, though in vastly different ways, than those in Russia and Hungary. Perhaps the wise observer and student of social evolution will go no farther than to assert the closer co-ordination of capital and labor, the assured readjustment of industrial and all other human relations under a general, intelligent, humane and sympathetic application of the co-operative principle. Profiteering is at last recognized as a crime. A league of nations against it has already been proposed. This consummation may be hastened by wise counsel and understanding, but it cannot be forced. The statement of the Golden Rule is a good many centuries back of us. Its adoption as a fixed rule of conduct appears to be a good many centuries ahead. Yet the moral order of this planet remains inflexible, and the milestones do drop behind.

Analogies, like that between this time and the convulsion when the old political structure cracked and trembled toward its slow fall, are more than significant. The air of every country in the world today is full of the voices of a new social order. They stammer helplessly, at times they speak madness or folly or crime, but they break a silence that will never close down about the souls of men. Humanity has started definitely on a new crusade. Abhorrent as are many of the leaders and mottoes that take its name in vain, fight though the world must, as it has ever been compelled to do, to substitute sanity and progress for the

ecstasy of destruction which is often the first effect of a half-conceived creative truth upon a brain too weak to bear it,—the unceasing purpose runs. The dim figure stands, pitying, understanding, constant and commanding, keeping watch above the strange revels of the time. Looking through his eyes, the frantic and distorted mask of the present is seen in the far future as it were the face of an angel.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Printed in Putnam's Magazine, December, 1909.

Are the explicit commands and the hardly less imperative promises of Christ's Sermon on the Mount to be taken literally, or are they a mere counsel of perfection, indicating an ideal way of life which we must worship afar off, with due regard for human imperfection and social limitations? Although the question is one of the most important that can be asked, and although life forces it daily upon every man, it is seldom faced squarely. The alternatives of confessing that practically all organized Christianity is deliberately unfaithful to the fundamentals of its own faith, and interpreting figuratively language so plain and positive that if it can be so explained away everything else in the New Testament dissolves into misty platitude, are not pleasant to choose from. But there they are.

Most persons who call themselves Christians take refuge in the plea, untenable for any candid and thoroughgoing mind, that the rule of life prescribed by Christ is inapplicable to modern conditions; that is to say, that He and His doctrine are less than universal. The more critically minded reject coldly the whole body of the Sermon on the Mount, not merely as impracticable but as unworthy. It is significant, both of the prevalence of this attitude and of the insistence with which the disowned tradition nevertheless keeps presenting itself after rebuff to the subconscious moral sense, that nobody can let the Sermon on the Mount alone. They who scorn it cannot permit it to die of its own inanity. It has to be crucified anew in every discussion of the past or prophecy of the future. Even the tomb does not hold it. The practical basis of a code apparently so unreasoning, yet in fact so persistent, must be considered. What, if anything, has history to say about it?

There is much interesting evidence in biography, if that can be held at all conclusive. The most striking instance, perhaps, is the life of Abraham Lincoln. The

American people think of him as the man of greatest practical achievement since Washington, as our most successful statesman when our national problems were most difficult; but the mention of his name also thrills them as no other can with the reverent tenderness that so near an approach to human perfection inspires. The law of conduct that he laid down for himself and by which he lived was modelled closely upon that reported by Matthew. But the parallel is not complete; nor can any illustration from individual life reply satisfactorily to objections directed against a policy as applied to collective action. Is there, then, authentic record of any community so testing life in the world with the Sermon on the Mount as its accepted guide that an answer to the question raised may be found in the event? Three times at least, it has encountered life with great literalness. To all who believe in scientific method, what actually happened will carry greater weight than any conclusion of abstract criticism or philosophy.

The Christians of the first century after Christ, and in a great measure of the next two centuries, did accept and act on the Sermon on the Mount as a rule of daily conduct. They followed its precepts literally and unto death. Were they overwhelmed by demands which were much more destructive of both the individual and the association in that age than they could possibly be in this? On the contrary, their example proved both so contagious and so conquering that it beat down the mightiest power on earth. The established social order saved itself from being swept away by the innovation and lost in it, only by accepting it nominally. It professed the doctrine in order that it might not be compelled to adopt the practice. In the time of Constantine, it was the World that conquered the Church under pretence of submission, not the Church that conquered the World. The Sermon on the Mount passed from an article of life to an empty profession, because those who hated and feared it found in this their only escape from its universal sway. Culture and wealth evaded it then as they evade it now,

because of its too great practical potency. To that change are due sixteen centuries of evil life as well as of incredible misfaiths.

For the second time, in the Middle Ages, arose those who would restore the Sermon on the Mount to the place where Jesus enthroned it. The monastic system, in its purity, was not a complete separation of the religious and contemplative mind from the world's activities, though it has been often so described. It was in fact nothing short of a deliberate attempt to reinstate in life the practices as well as the virtues to which beatitudes had been attached. At their best, the members of these orders were not esoterically withdrawn from the world. They worked, they taught, they healed, they relieved distress by physical ministration as well as by spiritual consolation. They also made such headway that even pontifical authority did not deny recognition to Francis of Assisi. His life and others actually realized in flesh the Sermon on the Mount. And again it was success and not failure that interfered. The selfish, the ease-loving, all the powers against which the Sermon on the Mount was directed, invaded, corrupted, destroyed. The monastic system fell not because it was unequal to contact with practical life, but because the World again conquered the Spirit.

In our own times, under the competitive and individualistic system, the experiment was tried. No thinker and no critic should be ignorant of the history of the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers. These were a body of people pledged to carry out literally the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount. And they did it. In the midst of great wars, they paid every penalty rather than bear arms. In private life they resisted no man. In a time when no right could be asserted or maintained without the aid of the courts, they refused to take part in any legal action. They would not, to escape any evil, take an oath. Within their fellowship property served poverty. Never have ideals had a trial more severely practical. The Quakers did not withdraw themselves into any sheltered or

isolated community. They lived in modern society, under modern conditions, accepted persecution cheerfully and stood upon their high hazard that the words of Jesus meant what they said. That they matured noble types in personal character and sustained an admirable conduct of morals is indisputable. That they flourished and found themselves a useful, and in the end, a happy portion of "the Whole" in both England and America is a matter to which many pages of history bear ample witness. They have fared ill and lost ground precisely in so far as they yielded to casuistry and moderated the stern simplicity of their doctrine to suit the desire for wealth, for conformity, for the very thing which, in their own language, they call "the World."

In these three instances the World was stronger than the Sermon on the Mount; not because the latter was impracticable, for in each case it triumphed fully over the practical objection, but because human nature did not maintain itself in hours of ease at its high level, and dissembled the very severity of the mandate in which lay not its weakness but its strength. The sword is not dulled because the hand grows too weak to wield it. And there is no practical demonstration in history apparently more complete than the established efficacy of the system of conduct prescribed in the Sermon on the Mount to satisfy the individual life, to mould character into beautiful forms and to cut a path through the brutal qualities that survive in man. It may be added, as a possibly illuminating conclusion, that the only hope for Socialism is built upon the same foundation. Whatever in that faith is inspiring, true, practical, convincing, is the child of a conception of human brotherhood derived from centuries of human acceptance of the Sermon on the Mount, however partial, dishonest and insincere the acceptance has been. The conception has at least preserved an immortal ideal; and, by one path or another, humanity will realize it or perish. But it can no more be realized today by something imposed from the outside, than it could be in Constantine's time.

The point here, however, is to controvert the shallow and astounding assumption that the Sermon on the Mount is a mere counsel of perfection, a verbal paradox, a mystic's dream. It is not only the most practical and practicable code of personal conduct extant today, completely vindicated by human history through two thousand years, but it is the touchstone by which all systems of political economy will eventually be tried. A competitive state in which the incentive to success should be acquisition for the purpose of benefiting others —not by a gift of millions after years of ruthlessness, but in the course of the day's occupation, and the hour's delight—is a conception quite in harmony with human nature as we have faith in it and as it is daily becoming. However far in the future that may be, it is time now to cease regarding the Sermon on the Mount as something to be apologized for or explained away, as something inapplicable to the general social and political life of man, just as we have ceased to believe that truth and beauty must remain forever the exclusive possessions of a chosen few.

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